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HOUSE MEMORIAL 61

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - SECOND SESSION, 2010

INTRODUCED BY

Elias Barela

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE CULTURAL AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT TO STUDY THE
FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING THE BELEN RAILROAD DEPOT AS THE
STATE RAILROAD MUSEUM.

WHEREAS, the Belen railroad depot is located in the heart
of downtown Belen, where it has welcomed trains transporting
passengers since 1880; and

WHEREAS, Belen is a thriving community that was originally
founded in 1740 by Spaniards in honor of the city of Bethlehem;
and

WHEREAS, Belen is located along the original Camino Real,
which is among New Mexico's most important cultural artifacts;
and

WHEREAS, Belen became a bustling railroad center for the
Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad, which first arrived in
.181699.1

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1 Belen in 1880, generating town growth, community and industry;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, in 1907, the Santa Fe railroad completed the
4 Belen cutoff from Amarillo, Texas, making it possible for many
5 more trains to travel east and west across the United States
6 and alleviating train travel through the steep Raton pass to
7 the north; and

8 WHEREAS, the creation of the cutoff resulted in Belen
9 becoming known as "the hub city"; and

10 WHEREAS, the location of the railroad depot is within
11 walking distance of the site of the old Harvey house
12 restaurant, which began serving passengers traveling through
13 the southwest in 1901, and which now houses the only Harvey
14 house museum in the state; and

15 WHEREAS, the Belen railroad depot now serves as the
16 southernmost stop of the New Mexico railrunner express,
17 transporting commuters and others north as far as Santa Fe and
18 bringing commuters and visitors safely to this charming
19 community, continuing the tradition begun with the inception of
20 the Harvey house in 1901; and

21 WHEREAS, many additional trains on the southern
22 transcontinental railroad pass through Belen each day; and

23 WHEREAS, the historic and current significance of the
24 Belen railroad combines to make this railroad depot the ideal
25 location for a state railroad museum;

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the cultural affairs department be requested to study the feasibility of designating the Belen railroad depot as the state railroad museum; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be transmitted to the office of the governor and the secretary of cultural affairs.